

MEDALLION HEAD of NAPOLEON BONAPARTE & MARIA LOUISA.



Ruled by Machinery from the Medal executed by Andrieu.

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ATKINSON'S CASKET

OR GEMS OF
LITERATURE, WIT AND SENTIMENT.

Thy fate unpity'd, and thy rites unpaid !
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
Pleas'd thy pale ghost, or grac'd thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd.

No. 2.] PHILADELPHIA.—FEBRUARY. [1834.

NAPOLEON AND MARIA LOUISA.

Ruled by Machinery, by Asa Spencer, from a Medal executed by Andrieu.

The beautiful medallion which embellishes the present number of the Casket, is a specimen of a peculiar style of engraving which America claims the exclusive honor of giving birth to. In 1817, by the use of a machine which had been invented in Philadelphia, *Christian Gobrecht*, die-sinker, produced upon copper an engraving from a medal, having upon it the head of Alexander of Russia. From this engraving impressions were taken and distributed. The claims set forth in the London Philosophical Magazine for 1832, rest upon no proof, while its existence in this country for so many years previous, abundantly established it as an American invention, even if the fact had ever been denied, which does not appear to be the case. In 1819, Mr. Asa Spencer, of the house of Draper, Underwood, Bald & Spencer, bank note engravers, took with him to London, a machine of the kind above alluded to, which was designed principally for straight and waved line ruling. This machine was used in London during the year just mentioned, and the mode of ruling waved lines, and of coying medals was then exhibited and explained by Mr. Spencer to several artists. Little, however, was done in the way of medal ruling, until about four years since, when a desire to apply the method to the engraving of designs for bank notes, caused it to be revived by Mr. Spencer, who bestowed great attention on it, and overcame the difficulties encountered in the outset.

The peculiar construction of this machine has never been made a secret, nor has it ever been patented, although prudential motives have required that it should not be minutely described, and thus be placed in the hands of those by whom its use might be perverted to improper purposes. In consequence of this free communication in relation to this machine, it is

now made, with modifications in the details, for engravers, by some of our machinists.

It may not be amiss, however, briefly to observe, that this machine is constructed much on the principle of a pentagraph. Since it has been introduced into the art of bank note engraving, it has materially increased the safety of notes, by rendering it wholly impossible to make a counterfeit. The effect produced is so peculiar as to defy all efforts of the graver at imitation. The steel implement of the engraver soon becomes blunted by an application of this kind, and the keen point of a diamond is alone found equal to the task of tracing successive lines of equal distinctness on the hard surface of the steel plate. Mr. Spencer cannot be too much distinguished for his zeal in perfecting an instrument which combines so much real utility with the beauty of its productions; while his success in doing so would seem to be the highest possible evidence of his skill and science as an artist and mechanic. The completion of such a machine appeared alone wanting to place the respectable engraving company before mentioned, at the summit of their profession. If they have heretofore been admitted to possess taste, talent and skill of the most exalted order, they must now be allowed to add the finishing qualification of *perfect safety*—a quality as necessary in their works as light is to creation.

A BLUSH—"What a mysterious thing is a blush! that a single word or look, or a thought should send that inimitable carnation over the cheek, like the soft tints of a summer sunset! Strange, too, that it is only the face—the human face—that is capable of blushing! The hand or foot does not turn red with modesty or shame any more than the glove or stocking which covers it. It is the face that is the heaven of the soul!—there may be traced the intellectual phenomena, with a confidence amounting to a moral certainty. A single blush should put the infidel to shame, and prove to him the absurdity of the doctrines of chance.